DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 210 795 EA 014 274

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TITLE Alternative Education Programs: A Guide for Implementation.
INSTITUTION New Jersey State Dept. of Education, Trenton. Div. of School Programs.
PUB DATE Jul 81
NOTE 39p.

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Delinquency Prevention; Dropout Prevention; Financial Support; Graduation Requirements; Guidelines; *Individualized Education Programs; *Nontraditional Education; Parent Participation; Program Descriptions; *Program Development; Secondary Education; *State Programs; State Standards; Student Participation
IDENTIFIERS *New Jersey

ABSTRACT

Based on a state board of education program to individualize graduation requirements, called the Program Completion Alternative, this guide discusses how and why New Jersey school districts ought to develop a variety of ways for students to meet state and local requirements; outlines the alternative education programs made possible by the new graduation requirements; and briefly describes 40 current alternative programs in the state. Following a brief introductory chapter, the second chapter makes a case for alternative educational opportunities based on their ability to reduce such problems as delinquency, dropouts, suspersions, expulsions, and truancy. Funding of alternative programs is touched on. The third chapter provides a guide to program planning, an overview of the Program Completion Alternative, and recommended procedures for establishing an alternative school, with an emphasis on parent and student participation. Chapter 4 contains a list of 37 alternative programs, including each school's name and address, name of the coordinator, and a one-paragraph description of the program. (Author/JM)

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Alternative Education Programs
A Guide for Implementation

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EA 014 274

July 1981

PTM NO. 200.41

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STATE OF NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
225 WEST STATE STREET
TRENTON, N. J. 08625

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER
CN 500

Dear Colleague:

In March 1980, the State Board of Education established standards for high school graduation to improve the educational opportunities for students in the state.

Although the standards and curriculum requirements now required may be considered more specific, they have maintained a system to individualize the curriculum for students with special needs, interests and abilities, known as the Program Completion Option. Referred to in the past as "Plan B," the option provides students with an alternative way of satisfying the high school graduation requirements.

Accordingly, local school districts are encouraged to take advantage of the flexibility the program completion option offers to accommodate the wide variety of needs, interests and aspirations of their students. The use of this option is not required, but may be chosen by students or staff in accordance with individual student needs.

This guide focuses attention on the need for developing options and the ways to facilitate their implementation.

Sincerely,

Fred G. Burke

Fred G. Burke
Commissioner

I. Introduction

Current interest in alternative education programs stems from concerns about violence, vandalism and disruption in the schools. These and other behaviors, such as truancy, absenteeism, substance abuse, the dropout rate and discipline problems, are only the obvious manifestations of larger, more generalized problems. Contributing factors are basic skills deficiencies, frustration, alienation, anxiety, poor or inappropriate motivations, and anger. These factors may stem from personal and family problems, a history of failure, negative self-concept, peer pressure, and a sometimes hostile, uncaring and punitive school environment that provides insufficient encouragement for the confused or angry student.

Solutions designed to reduce violence, vandalism and disruptive behavior in schools (the manifestation of the problem) without addressing the reasons underlying the behavior will be only partially effective. Alternative educational approaches that seek solutions to the fundamental educational problems associated with school disruption and failure must be used rather than curtailment of the symptoms.

Throughout the nation, panels and state task forces have been formed, studies have been conducted, and private agency foundation support has been provided, all seeking suitable educational options.

The New Jersey State Department of Education has for some time encouraged secondary schools to provide innovative curricula which develop the personal skills and maturity of students, even through experiences outside of the classroom.

The 1973 Report of the State Board Committee on Restructure encouraged local districts to grant academic credit based on "Plan B," a plan which permitted the completion of program or instruction outcomes, rather than basing credit on Carnegie units.

Furthermore, in the Spring of 1979 a Task Force on Violence, Vandalism and Disruption in the Schools, appointed by the Commissioner of Education, submitted its findings and recommendations to the New Jersey State Board of Education, which expressed concern about the needs of the distruptive student. In addition, the recently enacted High School Graduation Standards Act and the accompanying administrative code provisions adopted by the New Jersey State Board of Education in March of 1980 have set specific criteria for awarding a state endorsed high school diploma. (N.J.A.C. 6:8-4.2(d)ii)

Alternative education is now an available option for any student in meeting both local and state requirements. It can apply not only to the turned-off, failing or disruptive students, but also to the highly

motivated students, the gifted and talented students, and even the average student when appropriate.

This guide discusses the development of options which provide students with a variety of ways to meet state and local requirements; outlines the alternative education possibilities in the context of the new recently adopted high school graduation requirements; and describes briefly 40 alternative programs currently operative in New Jersey.

II. Alternative Education

A. DEFINITION

Alternative education is an educational strategy designed to provide non-traditional educational experiences to the conventional programs offered by the public school system for those students who are not succeeding in their present settings. It offers them educational program options and learning opportunities suitable to their special needs, values, interests, talents and aspirations.

B. A NATIONAL CONCERN

A National Panel on High Schools and Adolescent Education was appointed by the U.S. Office of Education to study secondary education because "student characteristics and societal conditions are changing rapidly, yet our secondary institutions appear to have remained relatively stable."[1] The panel in its final report stated that it:

> . . . is persuaded that both as an institution and as a social concept the American high school will remain the keystone of this Nation's educational system. However, it requires orderly reform. It must become flexible in order to cope with the shifting demands that changing populations place upon it . . . at the same time, remain true to its essential heritage as the major formal transmitter of the Nation's culture and history, as the testing and training field of youth in preparation for adulthood and citizenship, and as the crucial community agency in which the children of all groups learn to live both together and apart (pp. 1-2).

The panel also argued that the confines of one building are no longer enough to contain all the valuable and necessary experiences for today's young person and emphasized *comprehensive* education, not necessarily within the school building.

Because the school is a major socializing institution in the experience of young people (Rutter, et al., 1979, p. 205) and because

[1]National Panel on High School and Adolescent Education. Final report and recommendations: The education of adolescents. Washington, D.C., United States Department of Health, Education and Welfare, 1976, preface vii.

positive experiences in schools are critical to the development of constructive personal and social behavior patterns, schools must establish alternatives to traditional school practices.

C. NEW JERSEY PERSPECTIVE

A New Jersey State Department of Education issue paper, Alternatives in Education (1975), pointed out that:

> To some, the act of creating an alternative school is in itself an attack on the venerable and vulnerable traditions of education, because it implies that the system is not adequately serving all students and that perhaps there exists something more desirable. . . . Often the education community (teachers, principals, and superintendents) are products of the traditional system, and their feelings that it has served them well make them reluctant to accept and adapt to change. Effective change requires a receptiveness and willingness to try the untried, as well as the development of a new pattern of response on the part of those persons initiating or affected by alternatives in education (pp. 5-6).

In New Jersey, under the Public Educaton Act of 1975, schools must provide students ". . . the educational opportunity which will prepare them to function politically, economicaly and socially in a democratic society (18A:7A-4)."

In summary, alternative education provides a more personalized atmosphere through individualized program options; allows for more balance between cognitive and affective learning; and facilitates shared decision-making among school administrators, teachers, parents and students.[1]

The term "alternative" has been used as a catch all for any non-traditional education program regardless of the purpose, sponsorship, philosophy, and kinds of students served. Programs of this type include: open classroom or open school, schools without walls, home study and correspondence courses, General Educational Development (GED) test, adult education, vocational education, magnet schools, street academies/dropout centers, pregnancy/maternity centers, bilingual/ethnic/multi-cultural schools, special education, free schools, voucher plans, schools within schools and satellite schools. Many of these models however were developed as alternatives *to* the public school, and were not *within* the public school system.

Many of the objectives pursued by non-traditional programs as alternatives to the public schools can now be met within the public schools through the various options possible within the program completion concept as authorized by the N.J.A.C. 6:8-4.2. The program

[1]See figure 1 on page 8 which shows a variety of educational options available to satisfy the high school graduation requirements.

completion alternative permits district boards of education to provide non-traditional programs for students in New Jersey's public schools. It may be used: (1) in lieu of the credit year program of studies required for high school graduation; (2) for promotion and graduation, allowing credit for alternative curricular activities based on specific instructional objectives.

Programs may be established as follows (N.J.A.C. 6:84.2(d)ii):

(1) District boards may determine and establish a set number of curricular activities or programs for promotion and graduation.
(2) Programs shall be planned for individuals and/or groups based on specific instructional objectives.
(3) The principal shall certify completion of curriculum activities.
(4) Group programs based on specific instructional objectives shall be approved in the same manner as other approval courses. Individual programs shall be on file in the local district subject to review by the commissioner or his/her representative.

D. TARGET POPULATION

Alternative programs and facilities can benefit many different types of students: average students who may have special interests; students who, though highly motivated and self-directed, may have "turned off" and are not experiencing success through the traditional approaches; or gifted and talented students capable of high performance who require qualitatively different programs to develop their gifts and talents. These students are identified by exceptionally high performance, achievement, or potential in the areas of general intellectual ability, specific academic ability, creative or productive thinking ability, psychosocial ability, visual or performing arts ability and psycomotor ability.[1]

Alternative approaches can also benefit students considered "chronically disruptive," characterized by difficulty in abiding by the rules and regulations of the regular school program, absenteeism, difficulty in establishing good relationships with peers and/or adult authority, discipline problems, dropping out of school, truancy, consistent failure, substance abuse, disruptive or violent behavior and other related problems.

The State Board of Education requires that "a pupil shall be referred to the basic child study team to determine if the pupil is eligible for the services described in the special education regulations as a

[1]For additional information and suggested planning procedures consult *Guidelines for Gifted and Talented Educational Programs* prepared by the New Jersey Department of Education.

prerequisite to any board of education action on expulsion from the public school N.J.A.C. 6:28-1.5(e)." This requirement has led many school districts to classify such students erroneously as either emotionally disturbed or socially maladjusted, whereas, what they need is special support and assistance to develop more responsible patterns of behavior while meeting the high school graduation requirements. This can be provided through alternative schools or schools-within-schools, which often require separate facilities.

E. FUNDING

To develop alternative education programs many school districts look for special funding sources, such as categorical funds, special grants or compensatory education funding. According to Fantini (1973):

> Alternative education should not depend on increases in per pupil expenditures. Rather, each alternative should adapt itself to the going per-pupil expenditure rate of the school district. The idea is to use existing resources (human and material) more effectively, through alternative schools. . . . Consequently, teachers who are being paid but who are spending their time and effort in one way will, under alternative schools, be able to employ their styles and talents differently. This is more a rearrangement, a realignment, of existing resources than it is an add-on effort (p. 16).[1]

In most cases, the state equalization aid allotment and local school tax revenues available to the district for each enrolled student are sufficient to fund adequate educational programs in an alternative school.

Additional funding sources available to the local school district are the Title IVB entitlement for the purchase of instructional materials and equipment, and the RFP (request for proposals) approach which enables districts willing to develop successful practices to receive funding assistance through the various development programs administered by the department. These programs can then be shared with other school districts. Districts already operating successful programs may apply for validation, and other districts may apply for planning or adoption grants under the Title IV-C program.

Districts contemplating introduction of alternative education programs should also consider the "hidden" cost effective benefits. These include:

—cost of operating alternative programs versus cost of processing students later on through the criminal justice system

—projected cost savings from reduced school vandalism

[1]Fantini, Mario D. "Education by Choice" *NASSP Bulletin*, 1973, pp. 1-19.

—possible savings from reduced need to invest in more expensive designs and construction to make school "secure"
—savings from the need to hire security guards
—savings from more task-oriented uses of school staff (teachers as faculty members as opposed to security guards)
—savings from reduced teacher absenteeism, teacher "burnout" and the disproportionate amount of administrator's time taken up with discipline problems
—increase in state aid due to decrease in drop out rate.

F. ANTICIPATED RESULTS OF IMPLEMENTATION

—A reduction in the number of delinquent acts committed in and around schools.
—A reduction in student dropouts, suspensions, expulsions and truancy.
—An increase in the daily attendance rate in schools and school districts impacted by this program.
—An increase in the number of students experiencing academic success and graduating from school.
—An increase in the number of students making a successful transition to employment or post-secondary training and education.
—Adoption and implementation of school policies, procedures and practices which:
  —limit referrals by schools to the juvenile justice system;
  —provide for due process, fairness and consistency in disciplinary actions;
  —reduce student alienation through increased youth, parent and community agency participation in school decision making processes;
  —organize and structure learning in ways which enhance maturational development.
—Development and implementation of alternative educational options which increase the opportunity for cognitive, affective and practical learning, and the integration of these options into the regular school curriculum and program.

III. GUIDE TO PROGRAM PLANNING

Pupils may satisfy the credit year curriculum requirement set forth in N.J.A.C. 6:8-4.2 through one of two available ways in addition to the conventional program offered by the district:

1. Demonstration of mastery of locally determined proficiencies—whereby students earn course credits by passing a proficiency test in each of the required curricular areas for which this option is requested.
2. The program completion alternative—whereby students meet the minimum expectations and requirements established for the curricular activity approved by the district board of education for individual or group programs.

A. OVERVIEW OF THE PROGRAM COMPLETION ALTERNATIVE

High school graduation requirements for the curricular areas included in the recently revised administrative code (March, 1980) may be met by students through the program completion alternative which awards academic credit for alternative learning experiences. The following program types are examples of ways to accommodate students need:

1. Individualized Programs
2. Career Education
3. Independent Study
4. Group Projects
5. Mini Courses
6. Community Action Programs
7. Community Service Programs
8. Advanced Placement Examination Programs
9. Remedial/Tutorial Programs
10. School Service Programs
11. Off-Campus Projects
12. Research Projects
13. College Courses for High School Credit
14. Advanced Placement
15. Magnet School, Learning Center
16. Alternative Schools

Figure 1 shows the variety of educational options available to meet the credit year curriculum requirements and satisfy both local and state high school graduation requirements.[1] Program variety and flexibility

[1]The proficiency and curriculum requirements are fully explained in Section V of the Guidelines for High School Graduation Requirements issued by the New Jersey Department of Education in July 1980.

Figure 1: Overview of Educational Options to Satisfy High School Graduation Requirements

Conventional High School Program

1. Credit Year Aproach

—up to 4 credit years
  Communication
  Physical Education, Health and Safety
—up to 2 credit years
  Computation
  Social Studies and History
—1 credit year
  National or Physical Science
  Fine, Practical and/or Performing Arts
—½ credit year
  Career Exploration or Devlopment
—Electives

2. Proficiency Test

—Standardized
—Locally Developed
—General Educational Development (GED) Test

3. Vocational/Technical School Programs

—Agriculture/Agribusiness/Natural Resources
—Business Education
—Health Occupations
—Home Economics and Consumer Education
—Vocational Industrial Education

Alternative Individual/Group Options

1. Program Completion Approach

—Independent Study
—Community action/service programs
—Advanced Placement/Programs
—Research Projects
—College course for high school credit
—Mentor/Tutor Programs
—Special Course Offerings
—Group Projects
—Mini Courses
—Vocational/Career Programs
  Technology for children (T4C)
  Introduction to Vocations
  Experienced-Based Career Exploration
  Work Experience and Career Exploration
  Cooperative Industrial Education
  Employment Orientation
  Work Study and Summer Coupled Work Study
  Industrial Arts
  Learning Exchange Program
—Satellite School

2. Other

3. Alternative School Options

—Satellite School
—-School-within-a-school
—Magnet Schools
  Gifted
  Fine arts
  Other
—Adult High School

Categorical Populations

Special Program Approach

—Bilingual Education
—Special Education (IEP)
—Compensatory Education
—Migrant Education
—Adult Education

are key considerations to enable parents and students to choose those programs best suited to their needs and interests so as to provide opportunity for success.

B. ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL OPTION

The link between immediate school experiences and delinquency suggests the possibility that school experiences themselves contribute to delinquent behavior by not providing appropriate opportunities for success. To prevent violence, vandalism and disruption, schools must provide alternative educational approaches to enable students to experience success.

Expulsion of the disruptive student, an expedient often used, is not a satisfactory solution to the problem and deprives many of our students of an opportunity for the future, while, at the same time it frequently shifts the burden to other institutions, i.e., courts, correctional institutions, the juvenile justice system.

1. Program Elements[1]

To be effective, alternative schools must have certain elements over and above the provision of subject matter and special teaching strategies.

—An **environment of caring and acceptance**—an informal atmosphere, wherein the teacher is in control at all times. Many of the students are bright, understand the concept of "rights," and have difficulty handling the strict rules of a large school which may seem meaningless to them. Some students need a more personalized experience to learn the responsibilities and respect for others that go with individual rights.

—**Individualized instruction**—The curriculum must be based on the proficiencies established by the school district. It should be tailored to student's learning needs and interests, with clear learning goals, specific objectives and an individually paced learning program specified for each student.[2]

—**Reward system**—Effective in generating commitment and motivation, rewards for individual improvement in academic competency and positive classroom behavior should be clear, realistic, attainable and contingent upon student effort and proficiency.

—**Goal oriented work and learnig emphasis in the classroom**—Alternative programs must provide clear standards of achievement and create a "work and learning" atmosphere with classes

[1]All except the first have been established by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

[2]See pp. 13-14 for more details on the Individualized Program Plan.

structured so that students' attention and effort are clearly focused on developing cognitive skills and attaining educational goals.

—**Conducive physical and human factors** which include:

a. Small student population in the program. Fewer students are more likely to establish informal personal relationships with teachers, personal attachments among themselves and commitments to the school. These personal relationships often enhance self esteem and constrain negative behavior.
b. Low student ratio in the classroom. A small number of students provides teachers with greater opportunity to relate to students as individuals, to provide individual attention to their learning needs and to establish positive relationships with them. Although an optimal "student-teacher" ratio has not been established, a range of no more than 15 to 1 seems desirable. The use of community resources, parents and volunteers to supplement the teaching staff should be considered.
c. Caring, competent teachers. The most important characteristic is a combination of genuine interest in working with troubled students, patience and determination, flexibility and adaptability to different students. Teachers' personal characteristics and teaching styles are important for establishing mutual respect with students who have become alienated from traditional schools.
d. Strong, supportive administration. Strong leadership, consistency, and fairness appear to be more important than a particular administrative or management style. The school administrator must set the "climate" which leads to academic success for students, establishes respect for students, and results in fair and consistent discipline procedures.

—**Student and parent involvement in school decision making:** This approach has been advocated to increase attachment and commitment to school, to prevent delinquency and to ensure active involvement (see pp. 14-16 of this guide).

—**Supplemental social services:** Support services are beneficial, such as counseling and casework, specifically tailored to facilitate student adjustment and educational success.

—**Vocationally-oriented components:** These can increase student interest in, and attachment to, school but they may also track students into a less desirable status and occupational role, or may provide students access to jobs they could have gotten even without a vocational component, or prepare students for jobs which are not actually available to them in a tight labor

market. Review of these components should concentrate on facilitating the transition from school to work, the integration of academic and vocational training, and their delinquency prevention potential resulting from the development of cognitive skills.

—**Peer counseling:** While some peer counseling programs have helped reduce problem behaviors in traditional schools, the potential problems in their use in alternative programs need to be given throughtful attention, i.e., deviant values, delinquent attachments and the irresponsible use of peer pressure can exert a negative influence on the students.

—**Student selection criteria and procedures:** Student selection should not be referral by a teacher or administrator as a result of nonconforming school behavior. To avoid having the alternative school become a "dumping ground" or contribute to the racial segregation of students, criteria and procedures should be developed which require a team approach. The recruitment process should seek a student population representative of a cross section of the traditional school population. Alternatives which serve diverse students facilitate attachments among conforming and delinquency-prone youths which may help prevent delinquency.

—**Location:** The relative merits of different locations for alternative programs need to be carefully weighed. Separate facilities may encourage attachment to the alternative school but can also become dumping grounds for troublesome students; schools-within-schools may facilitate return to regular classes but may increase the negative labeling experienced by participants; and schools-without-walls may fail to provide students with a sense of belonging. Location should be decided with regard to the overall purpose and goals of the program.

—**Learning models:** Different learning approaches and environments may work better for students with different learning styles and abilities. Approaches which match students to learning environments must be considered.

—**Alternatives for primary grade students:** Alternative education approaches for primary grade students with academic difficulties or behavioral problems hold long term promise for prevention of future delinquency.

Educators acknowledge that certain patterns of behavior, work habits and learning characteristics that could interfere with successful school progress can often be recognized as early as kindergarten. To prevent learning and behavioral difficulties, local school district educational planners should consider the development of an early identification and intervention program in the early elementary grades for children exhibiting basic skills deficiencies, inadequate educational progress and/or discipline problems.

2. Recommended Procedures for Establishing an Alternative School

Initial Steps

If you are interested in establishing an Alternative School, the following planning procedures are recommended.

—Request professional assistance—either your area EIC, your County Office of Education, or the New Jersey State Department of Education.

—Organize a small steering committee to obtain input from others who will serve in a leadership role if the decision is made to pursue alternative education.

—Conduct an informal needs assessment to determine if there are interested students or those needing such a program.

—Visit several existing sites to see other programs in operation and what you may wish to do.

—Present the idea to the school district leadership for their input.

—Present a plan to the school board for its reaction.

—Ask for a formal board policy once you have completed a plan.

—Begin state approval procedures.

State Approval Procedures

A school district which desires to establish an alternative secondary school shall, in compliance with *N.J.A.C.* 6:8-42(d), follow these procedures:

1. An application for program approval must be submitted to the State Department of Education which includes the following information on a form available through the office of the county superintendent of schools:
   a. A program description and rationale of the learning needs, behavior problems and/or the educational interests and community concerns to be addressed by the alternative school program.
   b. The proposed staffing, curriculum and courses of study approved by the local board of education.
      i. A description of the curriculum and educational procedures to be used. It should indicate how the curriculum relates to the local proficiencies for each curricular area.
      ii. A list of the certified staff, and areas of their certification, that will be involved in the program. School aides certified by the county superintendent of schools should also be included.
      iii. An explanation of the independent study and/or experimental program components, if any, proposed as part of the alternative school offerings.

c. Proposed facilities to house the alternative school. Structures other than those meeting specification standards for regular instructional facilities must be temporarily approved by the county superintendent of schools.
d. An explanation of how non-certificated community resource persons will be used for instruction. The use of uncertificated community resource persons as a valuable supplemental adjunct is encouraged with alternative school programs so long as they work under the supervision of a certified instructor.
e. A description of the program monitoring procedures for the supervision and evaluation of the alternative school which outlines the responsibilities of the administrator, supervisory and instructional staff, including community resource persons when used. Certificated teachers shall have overall responsibility for the educational program and shall regularly monitor classroom instructional activities, and confer with the community resource persons. They shall also assign course credit and grades with the advice of the appropriate community resource persons.
f. The proposed date the alternative program is to become operational, along with any pertinent calendars and daily schedules for the proposed school, should be included with the application.

2. Upon approval of the operations of an alternative school, a board of education operating such school shall periodically submit to the commissioner or his designee progress reports for that school pursuant to the required goals, standards, guidelines, and procedures of evaluation set forth in *N.J.S.A.* 18A:7A-1, *et seq.*
3. A board of education considering the establishment of an alternative school or the modification of an established alternative school will be provided assistance in the development or modification of an appropriate alternative educational program on request from the office of the county superintendent of schools or the Bureau of Adult Continuing and Community Education, Division of School Programs, New Jersey State Department of Education.

3. The Individualized Program Plan

a. A specific individualized program plan (IPP) should be prepared for each student which should include:
   i. A description of the pupil's educational performance including academic achievement and vocational aspirations.

ii. A description of the program recommended to meet the pupil's needs.
iii. A statement explaining the rationale which supports this program option.
iv. A statement of the goals and objectives which describe the educational performance expected to be achieved through the program.
v. A statement indicating what curriculum proficiencies will be met by satisfactory completion of the program goals and objectives. It should also include the number of credits that will be earned in a given curricular area for each aspect of the educational experience(s) included in the plan.
vi. A description of the evaluation procedure that will be used to determine whether the specific instructional objectives, performance expectations and curriculum proficiencies have been met.

b. The credit awarded under this option should be based on demonstrated outcomes rather than on time spent. Therefore, minimum performance expectations must be established to assure that the program requirements have been met.
c. The program should be developed in consultation with the principal, counselor, teacher, pupil, parent and other staff members who know the pupil's educational performance. The coordinator of cooperative industrial education should be included in planning programs that have a work-related component.
d. The program should be under the supervision of a certified teaching staff member.
e. The chief school administrator or designee shall be responsible for the placement of pupils in conformance with the pupil's educational program.
f. Individual program plans should be kept on file in the local school district subject to review by the office of the county superintendent of schools.

C. PARENT INVOLVEMENT

As indicated above, parents should be encouraged to participate in the program planning process, because a student's difficulty with the school program also causes disruption and concern for the family, and because continuity between home and school is positively associated with a student's academic success. Thus, a parent participation section should be included as part of the individualized program plan in which the parent agrees to participate in and support the alternative education program. A suggested agreement might contain the following:

As a parent I agree to:
—talk with my child about his/her school activities regularly

—find out how my child is progressing by attending scheduled conferences or initiating meetings whenever needed.
—create a climate at home that supports school (curfews, TV viewing, school attendance, etc.)
—encourage good study and reading habits at home

Programs for parents could include some or all of the following:
—courses, workshops and services on parenting and parent-adolescent communication
—establishment of parent volunteer/aide and tutor programs which may be operated in the classroom, after school, or in the evening
—development of parent rap groups and family resource centers
—study groups for parents on specific basic skills areas
—creation of a Parent and Citizen Advisory Council that integrates relevant community resources and involves *groups* of parents in implementing the school's alternative program.

D. STUDENT PARTICIPATION

Student participation in the planning process and involvement in decision-making help assure program success, since participation generates a sense of responsibility for achieving the agreed-upon objectives. The Commissioner of Education has ackowledged that a critical element in the graduation requirements policies "is that students become partners with us in sharing the responsibility for their education . . . With graduation requirements, we have a mutually cooperative endeavor; the student must carry the responsibility to learn as we carry the responsibility to teach."

Students must be encouraged to examine their particular learning needs, interests and problems; must be helped to choose a course of action that wil lead to fulfillment of their goals and aspirations; and must recognize their responsbilities for their own actions and the resulting consequences.

While the overall curricular areas have been set by the credit year requirements established by the state, much flexibility exists. Proficiencies for each curriculum area are locally determined, allowing a wide variety of subject matter to be included, with many different aproaches and activities. Thus, students are allowed some choice in selecting one approach over another or one area of study over another within the same discipline. Such planning is the mutual responsibility of the students, their parents and the professionals involved in guiding the process. Therefore, a student participation section should be included as a specific component of the individualized program plan. A suggested agreement might contain the following:

As a student I agree to:
—attend school/class regularly

—come to school/class on time
—come to school/class prepared to work (with proper materials, homework assignments, etc.)
—come to school ready to learn (well rested, free from the influence of dangerous substances)
—use the facilities, equipment, materials, etc. in the way they were intended to be used (don't destroy or deface)
—learn and follow the school/class rules
—participate in class discussion, school activities, etc.
—make a legitimate effort to learn
—make an effort to cooperate in maintaining a safe and pleasant school environment
—respect the rights of other students to learn
—respect the rights of teachers to teach

In addition, special program components should involve student participation such as:

—choosing area of study and approaches to be used.
—peer tutoring and counseling
—regular school meetings ("town meetings") to establish sense of community and deal with problems
—student effectiveness training

Student participation should also be sought in the determination of school rules and codes of conduct.[1]

[1]For additional information and suggested planning procedures consult the *Handbook for Developing A Code of Conduct for Students* prepared by the New Jersey State Department of Education.

IV. Alternative Education Programs in New Jersey[1]

BERGENFIELD

Bergenfield High School, *Indivlual Needs Curriculum*
225 West Clinton Avenue, Bergenfield, N.J. 07621
Ralph Clark, Counselor
201-385-8700

Designed for potential dropouts, the program accommodates 12 students each year. Five teachers give individual attention in English, Social Studies, Mathematics, Science and Group Guidance. The program is housed in the regular high school building and has been in effect since 1971.

BLACKWOOD

Highland Regional School, *Alternative Program*
Erial Road, Blackwood, N.J. 08012
Daniel Williams, Guidance Director
609-227-4100

The program serves students with low average ability scores who test more than three grades below level in all areas on achievement tests, whose report cards show a pattern of failure, with poor discipline records. Available only to 9th and 10th graders, it offers work in English, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies. Students who do exceptionally well move out to regular classes so others may be accommodated. Close parental contact is maintained and the teachers are obligated to contact some parents each week. All minor disicipline problems are handled within the program. Initial studies indicated that less than 30% of these students completed high school prior to this program as compared to over 60% since its inception.

BRIDGEWATER-RARITAN

Bridgewater-Raritan High School-West, *The Alternative School*
606 First Avenue, Raritan, N.J. 08869
John Scott, Administrator
201-722-1500-X534

An individualized program located in an "on-campus" setting, the program comprises a half-day academic and a half-day work experience. Students are primarily taught by the school's teachers with some students mainstreamed into the West High School program. Each staff member "counsels" a small group of students,

[1]These programs are adapted from *An Alternative Education Directory for New Jersey* compiled by Leo Hurley in October 1980. It is available from the New Jersey Department of Education. There may be other programs in the state which have not been brought to our attention.

while the full time staff counselor is responsible for testing, scheduling and guidance. A supportive board administration and building principal are great assets to the program.

CAMDEN COUNTY

Juvenile Resource Center, *Alternate School*
319 Copper Street, Camden, N.J. 08101
Stella Horton, Director
609-963-4060

This is a Camden County alternate education program serving the needs of alienated and disruptive youth.

EAST ORANGE

East Orange High School, *HAY*
490 William Street, E. Orange, N.J. 07107
A.M. Reaves, Adminstrative Assistant
201-266-5800

Except for class size, *HAY* is no different from the regular school program. Emphases are put on small teacher/pupil ratio and individualized attention, with 99% seniors who are poorly motivated but not necessarily discipline problems. The ability level of most students in the program is above average.

ELIZABETH

Elizabeth High School, *Alternative Work Study Program for Potential School Dropouts*
Mitchell Building, 500 No. Broad Street, 07207
Charles Gaffen, Coordinator
201-353-2200-X223

The program is designed for students, grades 9-12, who are unable to function properly in the regular school curriculum. It is basically a supervised work-study program in which the students are under the guidance of a certified industrial arts teacher at a public work site. Students gain not only trade experience but also insight into a possible career choice. They also receive instruction in various home mechanics skills from the curriculum developed for the program, and stipend from CETA for their work.

Visits to various places of business expose them to many vocations. Individualized mathematics and language arts programs reinforce basic computational and communication skills. The students also participate in human relations group sessions to foster both personal insight and development in personal communication skills.

ELIZABETH

Grover Cleveland Jr. High School, *Learning Center*
Mitchell Building, 500 No. Broad Street, 07207
Thomas Ficarra, Teacher
201-353-2200

This program serves students in grades 6-7-8 who are poorly motivated and have academic and behavior problems. The curriculum includes reading and mathematics supplemented by field trips. Students are mainstreamed for other subjects and also attend classes in human relations.

ENGLEWOOD

Dwight Morrow High School, *Alternate High School*
12 Tenafly Road, Englewood, N.J. 07631
Nicholas Perna, Teacher
201-871-4300-X212

This is an on-campus program for students who exhibit behavior problems. The program has two components:

1. Mainstream—students are permitted to take regular courses, but homeroom, study hall and group counseling are in the Alternate School Environment.
2. Self-contained—students take homeroom, English, Science, Social Studies, Mathematics and Comp courses in Alternate School environment, but take Phys. Ed., lunch and electives in regular environment.

Englewood Middle School, *Learning Center and Two Plus Two*
12 Tenafly Road, Englewood, N.J. 07631
Henry J. Pruitt, Principal
201-871-4300

The Learning Center contains mostly 8th grade students who have learning problems and are aggressive in behavior. The major academic subjects are taught in a self contained manner; students go out to related arts and physical education.

The Two plus Two Program contains mostly 7th grade students who show passive immaturity or learning difficulties. These students are passive rather than aggressive. Two teachers in the program teach academic subjects as a team; the students go out to related arts and physical education.

FAIRLAWN

Memorial Junior High School, *Career Education/Advance*
501 Bergen Avenue, Fairlawn, N.J. 07410
Edward Sloan, Principal
201-796-4750

Career Education is for potential dropouts who are marginal students; it concentrates on field trips, taken on a regular basis,

related to the job market. Career Advance is for bright, poorly motivated students.

FRANKLINVILLE

Delesea Regional High School, *Alternate Education*
Blackwood Town Road, Franklinville, N.J. 08322
Roscoe Searles, Teacher
609-694-0100

This program provides more structure to students who are placed in the program by the administration and the child study team with parental involvement. Each student has an individualized educational plan prepared by the child study team. The program is designed to prepare the student to return to regular classes when he/she exhibits behavior which is acceptable in a regular school setting.

GLEN GARDNER

North Hunterdon Regional High School District, *Project Stride*
Route 31, Flemington, N.J. 08822
Barbara Rivell, Director
201-537-4800

Project Stride, an alternative school of the district, serves students with special needs who are referred by their guidance counselors or by the child study team. These students, unable or unwilling to function in the traditional setting, may be disruptive, truant, emotionally disturbed, or must carry family responsibilities, or may include pregnant girls or mothers and students who have dropped out and wish to return for a high school diploma.

Students fulfill the same credit requirements as the district high school and receive the same diploma. There are no classes since students are individually programmed and tutored and work at their own pace in a casual, informal atmosphere. Emphasis is on basic skills and preparation for holding a job. Students receive credit for work experience. The staff works closely with community agencies such as Manpower Office, DYFS, County Mental Health Offices, Probation Department and the JINS Shelter.

HIGHLAND PARK

Highland Park High School, D.E.A.L. *(Dept. of Ed. Alternatives for Learning)*
106 No. Fifth Avenue, Highland Park, N.J. 08904
Donald Ralph, Chairperson
201-572-2423

Serving 15-20 students in grades 9-12, the program provides a modified classroom experience with individualized instruction for potential high school drop outs. Students are under Plan B or preparing for the equivalency examination.

JERSEY CITY

Synder High School, *Focus*
88 Clifton Place, Jersey City, N.J. 07304
Joyce B. Byrd
201-547-4943/3935

The Focus program is considered as a "family group." Ten to twelve students meet with one teacher advisor for one class period each day. One credit per marking period is given for classwork which stresses basic skills. The program uses peer group pressure to create an atmosphere of trust and positive behavior. Behavior contracts are often written and enforced by the family group.

LONG BRANCH

Chelsea School
152 Chelsea Avenue, Long Branch, N.J. 07740
Charles Currie, Director
Ray Walsh, School Director
201-222-5190

The Chelsea School is a state operated residental therapeutic program for troubled adolescents. A full high school program is provided with maximum class sizes of 8-10. Individual and group counseling is provided as well as vocational guidance and rehabilitation.

MACOPIN

West Milford High School, *Drop Out Prevention*
46 Arnold Road, West Milford, N.J. 07480
Robert Farley, Guidance Coordinator
201-697-1700

Initiated in the 78-79 school year, funded by CETA (Comprehensive Training and Employment Act) Title IV monies, the program serves potential dropouts, offering them career counseling and related skills and services. Students, grades 7 through 12, with varying problems and degrees of potential for noncompletion of graduation requirements, are referred to the program by their counselors. Students may receive any or all of the following services: career testing, information and counseling; personal-social guidance and counseling; job related information; referral to other appropriate agencies and services including a work program. For students with a financial need, a component of the program offers an after school work/training program.

MAPLEWOOD

Columbia High School, *West House (CHAOS)*
17 Parker Avenue, Maplewood, N.J. 07040
George Goetz, Director
201-762-5600-X201

This mini school, an alternative educational program for juniors and seniors, meets for three hours, five mornings a week. In the afternoon, students may enroll in additional classes or a work/study program. The Alternative School curriculum includes graduation requirements in English, U.S. History 2, and Physical Education. Students also gain credit by enrolling in a wide variety of mini courses, and by assuming responsibility in the daily operation of the school. Because CHAOS has its own staff and facilities, students and teachers get to know each other well, with students' present needs and future plans the most important criteria. Students may receive up to 20 credits a year in the program.

MATAWAN

Matawan Regional High School, *Educational Opportunity Center*
Broad and South Streets, Matawan, N.J. 07747
Michael Klavon, Director, Vocational Education
Shela Galgan, Teacher
201-566-7920

This program is designed for a maximum of 10 students in grades 10-12 who have academic and behavior problems and are potential dropouts. A voluntary program, it stresses individualized tutoring and a vocational component.

MILLVILLE

Millville Senior High School, *Alternative School*
25 North High Street, Millville, N.J. 08332
Stephen P. Burke, Supervisor
609-825-8300

Initiated in September 1979, the program offers a diversified curriculum for students who have dropped out and are returning to school, for seniors making up credits, for students who need to finish school early, and for those who are disruptive and not able to adjust to the regular day school program. Classes meet five days per week from 3-7 p.m. and are housed in the senior high school. Course offerings include Basic English, English Novel, Communicative Skills, Introduction to Vocations, General Science, U.S. History I and II, Mathematics I and II, and Group Guidance. The school encourages all students to complete their high school education successfully.

MONTCLAIR

Montclair High School, *Alternate High School and Interim Programs*
22 Valley Road, Montclair, N.J. 07042
Pierson Fellows, Guidance Director
201-763-4000-X311

The *Alternate High School* is Montclair's oldest alternative education program. In existence for 9 years, it is designed for 12 students, grades 9-12, who have experienced failure in the traditional high school through boredom, skills deficiency, high potential that's unidentified and untapped, adolescent alienation, family and peer conflict, etc. Each year, the curriculum is revised and adapted to the needs of the new students involved. The program is housed in a single classroom that resembles a library reading room with an attached indoor greenhouse and a darkroom. The program integrates one's academic work with one's growth and/or therapeutic processes. The courses are mostly in the humanities. Students are allowed to take science, language and math subjects in the other larger programs in the system. Academic work is determined by contracts which are written for each course, each marking period. Writing is emphasized.

The *Interim Program* stresses basic skills for poorly motivated, marginal learners. These students often have a history of poor attendance and behavior problems.

NEPTUNE

Neptune Evening High School, *Adult Evening High School*
2106 Bangs Avenue, Neptune, N.J. 07753
Joseph Ryan, Vice Principal
201-774-6286

This program enables those who have not completed their high school diploma to do so, part-time or full-time, in the evening. It offers a second chance to realize individual goals in terms of further education, career development, and personal fulfillment. Classes are provided in three major areas: General Education, Vocational Development and Academic Preparation.

NEWARK

Education Center, *Work/Study Program*
2 Cedar Street, Newark, N.J. 07102
Rocco Misurell, Director

This alternative high school program, based on a Work/Study experience, employs diagnostic prescriptive teaching, using the Adult Basic Education Testing program. A year round program of 12 months, it is held in cooperation with business and industry as well as federally funded interim work programs such as CETA or YEPT. Two graduations are held per year, in March and Septem-

ber, with a high school diploma granted. This school is fully accredited by the State Department and has been fully funded by the Newark Board of Education since 1964. Over 1600 students have been graduated since that time. Open enrollment policy permits students to register at any time during the year. Eligibility depends on 10th grade credits, residence in Newark, age 16 and 20, and out of school for six months.

West Kinney Middle School, *Suspension-on-Site*
2 Cedar Street, Newark, N.J. 07102
Margaret R. Roberts, Guidance Counselor
201-733-6764

This program is designed for 20 students at a time in grades 7-8, all with attendance, behavior and academic problems. Individualized instruction is used. The program is an alternative to school suspension, and individual counseling related to specific academic and behavior needs is provided.

OLD TAPPAN

Northern Valley Regional High School, *Project Pass*
Central Avenue, Old Tappan, N.J. 07675
John Conlon, Guidance Director
201-768-3200-X280

A program for poorly motivated, alienated and dropout prone students, the program provides individualized instruction in English, reading, social studies, mathematics and physical education and health. A work experience program is included and students seek their own employment. All aspects of this program accent flexibility and good human relationships. Project Pass accommodates 20 students in grades 11-12.

PENNSAUKEN

Pennsauken Junior High School, *Alternative Class*
Hylton Road, Pennsauken, N.J. 08110
Joseph F. Mondelli, Principal
609-662-8500

This program is designed to change negative attitudes toward school life into positive attitudes. A self-contained program, four teachers visit each day to give instruction in mathematics, science, social studies and English. The students are permitted to take part in other subjects in other parts of the building if they can handle them.

PEQUANNOCK

Pequannock Township High School, *I.C.E. (Isolated Controlled Environment)*
493 Newark-Pompton Turnpike, Pompton Plains, N.J. 07444
Ralph M. Rizzolo, Vice Principal
201-835-5800

This program is designed for 11 suspended students in grades 9-12. Individualized instruction is provided in all subjects, and group counseling is used.

PERTH AMBOY

Perth Amboy High School, *Perth Amboy Alternative High School*
178 Barracks Street, Perth Amboy, N.J. 08861
Wayne Otlowski, Teacher Coordinator
201-826-3360-X274

The Alternative School concept in Perth Amboy started in 1973 as a joint effort between the Board of Education and the Office of Community Development to help those students who were potential dropouts, truants, delinquents and academic misfits. Starting slowly as a pilot program housed in a storefront school, the school today is solely funded by the Board of Education. Based in the Neighborhood Center on Olive Street, it has a present enrollment of 24 students with 3 staff members.

PRINCETON

Princeton High School, *Princeton Learning Community* and *Princeton Community Resource Program*
P.O. Box 711, Princeton, N.J. 08540
Dr. Ron Horowitz, Teacher
609-924-5600-X328

The *Learning Community* is an Alternate School within Princeton High School stressing the academic areas of English, social studies, and mathematics. There are regular class periods; 5 credits are given for a full year course; and grades are issued 4 times during the year. The Learning Community, however, differs from the high school in the following:

—It has about 100 members.
—Classes are often divided into smaller groups.
—Most courses are open to all students; they are not segregated by grade. For example, Freshman can take U.S. History I.
—Students have considerable influence in classroom decision.
—Individualized and small group instruction is emphasized.

The *Princeton Community Resource Program* is a community based program to meet the needs of students who wish to expand their learning beyond the classroom. With the approval of the staff, individual and group activities use professional, cultural, or educa-

tional resources in the community. Students may work with a lawyer, doctor, community officials, artist, professor, or any other individual in order to complete a project. Criteria for evaluation are determined by agreement with the staff and administration. Students in the program are expected to establish specific weekly and long term objectives, present objectives for approval to the staff and community sponsors, keep a log of specific activities, and develop a process so that their work can be replicated by others.

The program is governed by an advisory board, comprising school and community representatives, which offers suggestions about program and fosters a cooperative network between the school and community.

RIDGEWOOD

Ridgewood High School, *Alternate Program*
49 Cottage Place, Ridgewood, N.J. 07450
Miss Helen Asiangies, Teacher
Mr. J. McKeon, Teacher
201-444-9600

Serving a maximum of 20 junior and 20 seniors, this is an alternative English and social studies program. A contract system is employed and students are expected to plan and organize their own learning. Research projects and community projects and service are an important part of the program. Teachers serve as guides and advisors. Average and above average students participate.

SADDLE BROOK

Saddle Brook High School, *Alternate School*
Mayhill Street, Saddle Brook, N.J. 07662
Miss Jane Moffet, Principal
201-843-2880

This is an alternative program for dropout-prone and disruptive youth.

SOMERVILLE

Somerville Middle School, *Alternate Program*
51 West Cliff Street, Somerville, N.J. 08876
Mrs. Bernice P. Venable, Principal
201-722-4600

This program is for suspended students, students with social and discipline problems, new students and others who have specific academic problems. Individualized instruction is provided by a special instructor who cooperates with the regular teacher.

SOUTH BRUNSWICK

South Brunswick High School, *Project Promise*
One Executive Drive, South Brunswick, N.J. 08852
Dr. Katye M. Monroe, Director, Alternative Program
201-329-4044

This alternative program is called "Project Promise" because it promises to give added support to students that have difficulty adjusting to the traditional school program. It provides specific alternatives for the students to develop skills as well as use the skills they already possess. Special classes aid students through motivational activities. It provides more of an individual approach to learning than the traditional school. Other specific activities are designed by students which enable them to use their skills and develop them into marketable channels.

SOUTH ORANGE (See MAPLEWOOD)

TEANECK

Teaneck High School, *Alternative II Program*
1 West Forest Avenue, Teaneck, N.J. 07666
Robert Wright, Assistant Principal
201-837-2232-X732

This program has approximately 70 students, four teachers, one guidance counselor and a director, and is designed for students who will benefit academically and socially from a close relationship with teachers and other students. They receive extra assistance with skills, and special attention is given to improve negative behavior such as underachievement, cutting, etc. All activities revolve around the core curriculum, Reading, History, Mathematics and English. The primary goal is to insure that students don't get "lost in the shuffle." Academic materials, when possible, serve the dual function of strengthening character and developing skills. In addition, meetings between students and staff, group counseling, career orientation, field trips and physical activities (softball, hikes, volley ball, etc.), all foster a sense of community and belonging.

TRENTON

Junior High School #1, *Mercer Street Friends*
108 North Clinton Avenue, Trenton, N.J. 08609
Albert Williams, Principal
609-909-2690

Accommodating a maximum of 30 students in grades 7-12, the program is designed for students who are poorly motivated, truant, potential dropout and in some cases, disruptive. The curriculum includes English, reading, social studies, mathematics and health. The program is individualized and includes a CETA work program.

UNION

Union High School, *Career On-Site Training (C.O.S.T.)*
2369 Morris Avenue, Union, N.J. 07083
Joseph E. Beliveau, Coordinator
201-688-1200

Designed for alienated students with behavior and attendance problems, the program combines work experience with academic instruction, leading to high school graduation and employment. Up to 40 students in grades 10, 11, and 12 enter the program.

Kawanecki Jr. High School, *On the Job Training (OJT)*
2369 Morris Avenue, Union, N.J. 07083
Stella A. Gallo, Counselor
201-688-1200

The "On the Job Training Program," formerly "Work Experience Career Exploration Program" (W.E.C.E.P.) was developed to help school alienated students, ages 14-16, to experience on-the-job training and continue their education.

VINELAND

Winslow Annex School, *Supervised Individual Instruction Program (S.I.I.P.)*
106 Landis Avenue, Vineland, N.J. 08360
James Bergmann, Teacher
609-692-3798-X207

This program works with disruptive students. They are removed from the regular class setting and sent to S.I.I.P. for a minimum of 20 days. During this time behavior modification and individual lessons are used to determine if the student needs further CST evaluation, and what type of school program is needed. Alternatives may be: returning to regular class, special class, adult school, GED, etc.

WASHINGTON

Warren Hills Jr. High School, *Ungraded Class*
25 West Washington Avenue, Washington, N.J. 07882
Michael Flood, Principal
201-689-0750

This program is designed to assist pupils who have academic and/or peer social needs that prevent them from succeeding in the regular school program. Limited class size enables concentrated efforts to remedy their deficiencies and address their needs. Pupils are again mainstreamed when they achieve success.

WESTFIELD

Westfield High School, *Project 79*
305 Elm Street, Westfield, N.J. 07090
Beverly J. Geddis, Teacher
201-232-2020

This program addresses students of average or above average ability who are having difficulty in a traditional class setting. English, mathematics, social studies and science are taught in the program which runs from 8:25-11:15 each day. The students are mainstreamed for physical education and all other courses. Various methods of instruction, including individualization and an interdisciplinary approach, are used so that each student may receive the attention needed. A schedule of 10, 20-minute periods provides flexibility for large and small group instruction and for ancillary activities.

WILLINGBORO

Willingboro School House,
Salem Road, Willingboro, N.J 08046
Joseph Pezzullo, Coordinator
609-871-9000

Started in 1970 with 50 students in grades 7-11 the program is for those not able to adjust to the regular curriculum. It attempts to help each student improve his/her self image and make better behavioral adjustment in order to return eventually to the regular high school system. The program is 100% suburban, contains 8 full-time staff members, and is funded by the Board of Education. Admission is by referral and interview.

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